

**Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Wisconsin**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 27, 2020

**Madison Man Sentenced for 2nd Conviction for Passing Counterfeit
Currency**

MADISON, WIS. – Scott C. Blader, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Cornelius Stewart, 25, Madison, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge William Conley to 36 months in federal prison for conspiring with others to pass counterfeit U.S. currency at numerous merchants in Wisconsin in early 2019. Stewart pleaded guilty to the conspiracy charge on December 13, 2019.

In addition to the prison time for this new conviction, Stewart also received an additional 12-month sentence based upon the revocation of his federal supervision for a prior conviction for passing counterfeit currency. The 12-month sentence will be served consecutive to the 36-month sentence. In February 2017, Stewart and four other co-defendants were convicted of passing counterfeit \$100 bills in southern Wisconsin during 2016. Stewart served two years in prison as a result of that conviction, and was released to federal supervision in early 2019.

From March through May 2019, while he was on federal supervision, Stewart again supplied counterfeit currency to four new associates. They passed the counterfeit \$100 bills at nearly 80 restaurants and merchants from Hudson, Wisconsin to Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. The group would make small-dollar purchases for which they would present the fake \$100 bills in order to receive a large amount of change in legitimate currency from the merchants. His co-conspirators would bring legitimate currency back to Stewart in exchange for more counterfeit bills to pass.

Judge Conley, who had sentenced Stewart for the prior offense, expressed frustration with Stewart's choice to commit the exact same crime and to do so while on supervised release for his original conviction. In addition to the total sentence of four years, Judge Conley ordered Stewart to pay restitution of \$8,294.33 to the victims of his scheme.

The charges in this case were the result of an investigation conducted by the Stoughton, Hudson, Madison, Middleton, and Beaver Dam Police Departments in coordination with the U.S. Secret Service, with the assistance of other police departments and sheriffs' offices in Wisconsin. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert A. Anderson.